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ABSTRACT

The paper describes the Academic Internship Program for Handicapped Students at the University of California, Riverside. An introductory section provides an overview of internships in terms of function, purpose, supervision, grading systems, needs of interns, and conclusions from the literature. The project addresses student problems in the following areas: narrow range of experience, undeveloped communication skills, occupational illiteracy, lack of work experience, job stereotyping, and lack of interest by faculty members. Data is presented on evaluation of the internship program by students, faculty, and employers. Among conclusions are that all three populations involved with the academic internships were positive in their evaluations of the experience: students believed their internships related directly to their academic programs and career goals: and except for some specific physical handicaps, disabled interns performed just as well, and in some cases better, than nondisabled students. (SBH)

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INTERNSHIPS AND EFFECTIVE CAREER DEVELOPMENT FOR DISABLED STUDENTS

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INTERNSHIPS

Functions

Internships should be recognized as one part of a series of learning experiences which are provided for students. The internship follows other kinds of experiences, each of which is intended to prepare the individual for successful completion of the learning stages which follow. The internship is normally a terminal experience, as it is usually undertaken in the junior or senior year in undergraduate programs.

A few internship programs are designed primarily to extend the professional laboratory experiences during which the student can assume greater professional responsibility. Within this arrangement the student should be provided with supervised practice in which he or she can apply and test theoretical concepts. A wide variety of experiences can be provided within this pattern. Sometimes summer internships are available as well as internships during the academic year.

The internship should be an experience which provides face-to-face contact with the realitites of practice. It should be a full-fledged decision-making, and strategy designing assignment which carries the full weight of a professional function.

Purpose

Like a constant thread through the descriptions of internship programs, both graduate and undergraduate, runs the theme that the strength lies in the ability to integrate theory and practice in the internship. The assumption here, of course, is that the teaching-learning process and its application in a real, not a contrived classroom setting is desirable and good. On that assumption, therefore, rests the claim internship programs make: that interns have an opportunity to experience reality in their teaching along with their study of theory. An opportunity which students in regular programs rarely seem to have.

Supervision

Supervision of interns in the field can be provided by persons in a variety of positions. Even though most of these professionals have had no special training in supervision, often times the college supervisor can set the climate and help the on-site supervisor develop needed skills for supervision. In some cases those responsible for on-site supervision were granted some time to assume this responsibility.

Seminars

It should be a cooperative agreement among various departments as to the importance of seminars. Seminars may be organized either formally or informally. In the initial period, the intern should be encouraged to develop his/her own relationship with other students in the seminar and the instructor.

Grading Systems

Departments should agree on a suitable grading program for interns and perhaps there can be interdepartmental agreement on intern grading and evaluation. Some departments use letter grades (A,B,C.), other departments are on a pass/fail basis. Both systems are equitable to the student and in many cases students prefer the graded system to the nongraded because they usually have a lot invested into their internship and can get an "A" or "B".

Needs of Interns

Although most interns felt the advantages of the program outweighed the disadvantages, they still felt there were some basic weaknesses in their program that could be corrected.

Many students felt that their internship could have been improved by giving greater stress to more intensive preparation before the internship. Inadequate supervision was listed, along with a desire to further develop the role and relationship between the intern and the on-site supervisor. The interns would like to have more counseling, more supervision, more opportunity to consult with other interns, with the on-site supervisor, and with the college supervisor.

Conclusions from the Research Literature

In surveying the literature on intern programs the following conclusions have been reported:

1. The representatives of the colleges and universities agree that intern programs can work and are a benefit to students, i.e., better job opportunities and higher pay. Several also indicate that there are the major advantages of internship: (1) gradual induction into a profession, (2) helpful supervision, (3) application of theory to practice, and (4) participation in a variety of responsibilities.

2. Regardless of the limitation, all but a few of the respondents working with programs indicate that there are many positive aspects to such programs and appear willing to adopt them.

3. Minor improvements can be made in existing programs. They favor giving credit to students and rewarding faculty for this extra work. Faculty should have regular hours for supervision. Many indicate there should be minimum standards for acceptance into the program.

4. There is a sufficient body of information in planning and executing internship programs on the university level for programs to have passed the experimental stage and for the internship to become a more general practice in this country. The results of this study show, however, that few have actually gotten into a program of this kind while others want to.

5. Internship programs should be carefully developed as a cooperative enterprise involving employers, college or university staff, as well as cooperating institutions where the interns may practice. The data show that university regulations and state laws do not seem to prohibit the development of such programs.

6. Actual participation is the main activity of the intern during the internship period. The study shows that there is opportunity for the intern to work under a supervisor yet be independent.

7. The intern should be competent in his major before being considered for off-campus work. The data show that most want minimum requirements for entrance into internship programs and most want to keep it an academic activity by giving credit.

8. In the literature the most frequently enumerated advantages of the internship program are that the supervisor is able to analyze and become more critical of his own work, that the presence of the intern serves as a spur and incentive in keeping the cooperating supervisor "alert," and that the supervisor gains constructive suggestions and new points of view from supervising interns.

Also, internships will progress little until the entire program is placed under the direction of a person representing the college or university with sufficient time and facilities to develop the program.

9. The widespread adoption of internships is not a question of principle, but of provision of adequate resources and well-trained personnel to administrate the program as indicated in the literature. Such programs, however, seem to be tied to issues and trends taking place in the total society, i.e., supply and demand, availability of money, etc.

10. Sufficient time, means of transportation, and funds must be made available if the director of internships and the college supervisors are to accomplish their work. The study data indicate the need for a system of payment to supervisors.

11. A screening process should be designed and implemented to aid in the selection of the intern. Grade point average, social maturity, and success in classroom teaching play a role in selection.

12. It appears that internship programs may be expanded in the future.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

A number of research studies project themselves out of the findings of this investigation. Among them are:

1. There is a need for experimental studies designed to discover the best

techniques, procedures, and devices to be used in selecting interns and activities for the internship program.

2. The value of internship can be measured only in terms of the extent to which it makes for more competent and more successful instruction. A comprehensive study should be made to measure the effectiveness of internships by a follow-up study of paired groups, comparing the results secured by instructors who have not been interns with those secured by instructors of similar talents, background, and pre-service training who have been interns (Bishop 1946).

3. Investigation should be made concerning the reaction of former interns concerning the value of their internship experiences (Cox 1965).

4. A survey should be made to evaluate the reactions of schools where internship programs have been applied compared to those where no such programs have been introduced.

5. A study should be made of the content of and method of operating internship programs with a focus on making improvements in their near experimental educational programs.

The internship's values and purposes go beyond those of intern. There are some benefits as well for the sponsoring administration and the cooperating university as well as the professions.

Experience in other fields clearly show that professionalization and professional education do not make significant advances until the practicing members of the profession take firm steps to bring about improvement.

Internships do not just happen, they are planned and carefully supervised. No one professor or university can carry the program alone. The task is a major one demanding the best thinking, the most vigorous action and the united support of the professional school system, the profession, the state, and the intern.

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A. PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Academic Internship Program for Handicapped Students at the University of California, Riverside was funded for the 1977-78 and 1978-79 school years by the FUND FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION in the amount of $94,022. As an adjunct to the already well established Academic Internship Center, it was designed to meet the special career development needs of students with disabilities. It has been found that this group of studentsgenerally had little or no work history and a particularly narrow view of the career options available to them.

Additional expertise and time were needed beyond the resources of the Academic Internship Center to assess each student's needs, to appropriately advise them, to educate employers, to facilitate accessibility measures, to coordinate transportation to and from internship sites, and to develop faculty support of the program.

B. PURPOSE

The problems that this project addressed can be broken down into the following areas:

1) Narrow range of experience: Many handicapped students have previously attended schools exclusively for the handicapped and have been "sheltered" by parents and others. As a consequence, their awareness of educational and career alternatives is limited. In addition,

the experiences these students have had in exploring educational and employment opportunities may have been negative. The very fact that such legislation as Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is needed, attests to the fact that in spite of great progress, discrimination still exists.

2) Undeveloped communication skills: This problem frequently stems from feelings of social alienation, low self-esteem, and a lack of confidence, especially in coping with unfamiliar situations.

3) "Occupational illiteracy" or at least a very constrictive view of potential educational and career options: Many disabled persons have worked so hard just to enter the University that they view a university education as an end in itself, rather than as the means to a productive and meaningful life. In addition, many persons with disabilities unconsciously use education as a way of avoiding the "real world".

4) An almost total lack of work experience, especially work experience relevant to professional careers: Also there is a definite lack of role models in all but the most common career areas, such as teaching and social work, areas which have been designated as acceptable for disabled persons.

5) Job sterotyping, if not outright discrimination, on the part of the employers: These groups need to be better represented in such occupations as banking, private business and various scientific fields.

6) A lack of interest on the part of faculty members in the career development of students with disabilities: This results in a lack of support of the internship program which is particularly harmful to the target group of students.

C. BACKGROUND AND ORIGINS

With its viable and growing Academic Internship Program and a high percentage of students with disabilities, the University of California, Riverside has an institutional commitment to both internships and special services for disabled students.

The University has a student body of 4600, and offers currcula in the liberal arts and natural and agricultural sciences. Because of its mild southern California climate, its flat terrain and the almost total accessibility to its facilities, it has the highest percentage of students with physical disabilities of any of the nine UC campuses. The disabilities of these students include visual impairments, spinal cord injuries, hearing impairments, rheumatoid arthritis, neuro-muscular control disorders, bone diseases, hemophilia, and respiratory problems.

UCR's traditional orientation has been one of high academic standards and sound preparation for professional schools and academic research. With the changing job market, a need arose to help students bridge the gap between education and employment. In response to this need, the Academic Internship Center was established in 1975.

The purpose of academic internships at UCR is to provide students with an opportunity to test the concepts and theories learned in the classroom. Through these off-campus experiences, ideally, the students will be better able to clarify their educational goals, explore and develop new educational directions, and develop realistic career goals.

An academic internship involves a direct relationship between the student, the faculty sponsor, the on-site supervisor and the staff of the Academic Internship Center. The Academic Internship Center advises

and screens students, works with employers to set up internships, and consults with faculty to ensure that the internship provides a valid learning experience with an academic component. Academic credit is given only when the internship meets the rigorous criteria outlined in the Academic Internship Center Policy Manual.

In its original form, the internship program had been able to accommodate only a limited number of physically disabled students. These were typically highly motivated and academically well-prepared students who had the confidence to participate in an off-campus program. One case involved a blind student who interned for one quarter at Security Pacific National Bank, and who now has a career position as an administrative analyst in the corporate office of the same bank. Another student who is confined to a wheelchair spent a quarter as a counselor-aide at Riverside General Hospital. This experience (her first work experience) greatly increased her confidence and her determination to pursue a career in counseling. Because of the success of these initial interns with disabilities, a grant proposal was written to provide expanded experiential learning opportunities for physically limited students.

D. EVALUATION DESIGN

The design for evaluation of the project consisted of several processes. Ongoing data collection was a priority.

1. Records were kept on all intern placements, faculty involvement, and employer involvement.

2. Students and employers completed a written evaluation form at the end of each experience.

3. Students, faculty, and employers were interviewed by an external evaluation at the completion of the project.

E. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project description is written in terms of the following list of program objectives and the ways in which those objectives were met, revised or dismissed as unrealistic.

I. PROVIDE INTERNSHIP SERVICES AND PROGRAMS SPECIFICALLY FOR HANDICAPPED STUDENTS

A. Establish specialized internships either not available or only marginally available, including the following:

1. Introductory internships. These internships would allow students to explore a career area before making a final decision on an academic major. Under ordinary circumstances students at UCR are not allowed to intern before their junior year. It was felt that an exception should be made with students with disabilities, because, generally, they have had so little work experience. It was hoped that through early placement in non-traditional internships (e.g., science and management in the private sector) students would change their majors away from the more traditional social science and humanities fields. This did not prove to be true because of two factors:
   a. Students with disabilities have an even more difficult time adjusting to college life than able-bodied students. For this reason, the additional responsibility of an internship is inappropriate in the freshmen or sophomore year.
   b. By the time a student reaches sophomore status in college it is too late to change from a humanities orientation to a science major. The interest sparked during one internship cannot compensate for poor academic preparation during high school.
2. Internships with private industry. Because of a limited perspective of potential educational and career opportunities, students with disabilities do not typically train for, seek or find employment in the private sector.

This objective was, and continues to be met with 24 internships with private employers available to students. Twelve or 22% of the 54 internship placements over the two years of the project were with private employers.

3. "Social Service" internships. While internships in the social sciences were available, it was seen as important to provide students with both a number and variety of experiences in this area in order to broaden their perceptions of the types of careers in which one can have an impact. This goals was also accomplished with twenty-nine different social service internships being available to students. Twenty or 37% of the 54 placements were with social service agencies.

B. Provide counseling in experiential learning and career development.

1. Presentation of seminars describing the Internship Center and careers in general.

This was accomplished to some extent in that presentations on the Internship Program were made at the Disabled Students Union meetings. However, other seminars designed exclusively for students with disabilities were not well attended, regardless of the extent of the publicity. Two such seminars were offered and attended by only two and three students. Feedback indicated that this was due to the students' reluctance to be singled out because of their disabilities. We found it much more effective to encourage students with disabilities to attend regularly scheduled career seminars.

2. Utilization of handicapped alumni to serve as role models

and resource persons. Alumni with disabilities were contacted and a directory of those willing to participate in career seminars and serve as advisors was compiled which includes both resumes and photographs.

3. Utilization of peer advisors. Throughout the two years three peer counselors were trained in internship policies and procedures, the use of the career information library, peer counseling techniques, and campus resources. They proved quite useful in extending the Coordinator's time.
4. Development of a beginning and transfer student orientation program designed to acquaint students with disabilities with the Academic Internship Center and its programs and services. The Coordinator of the Program for Students with Disabilities worked very closely with the campus recruiter for special students. She met with most new students when they first came on campus to acquaint them with the Academic Internship Program.
5. Use of videotape equipment for practice interview sessions to help students develop beter oral communication skills and more confidence in their interviewing abilities. The first year of the program interviews with the students were videotaped; however, this practice was discontinued. Students with severe disabilities who had not had the opportunity to watch themselves on videotape before, found the experience unsettling. Interviewing workshops were held on a regular basis throughout the second year, with viedotape equipment being used upon request.

II. EDUCATE EMPLOYERS IN BUSINESS, INDUSTRY, AND GOVERNMENT IN THE CAPABILITIES AND POTENTIAL OF PERSONNEL WITH DISABILITIES.

A. Plan and present seminars and small group workshops for employers both on the Riverside campus and at the employers' worksites. Each year of the program a one-day employers' conference was held. Forty employers attended the first year, seventy the second. This served to educate employers on the potential of people with disabilities and on the UCR Internship Progarm.

B. Provide employers with written and audiovisual materials on the capabilities of handicapped people and supply information on state and federal assistance including consulting services and financial aide. Throughout the course of the two years of the grant the Academic Internship Center became a well known community resource center for materials on employing persons with disabilities. Available were materials on state and federal legislation, the prize-winning film, A Different Approach, literature on the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, as well as brochures and pamphlets on physical accessibility and assistive devices.

C. Visit employers on an individual basis to discuss and arrange internships. Over 200 employers were contacted regarding internship development. Approximately 125 employers actually made internships available in fields as diverse as bio-statistics, historical preservation, criminology, investment analysis, polution control, optometry, transportation planning, day care and substance abuse therapy.

III. INCREASE FACULTY PARTICIPATION IN THE PROPOSED SPECIALIZED INTERNSHIP PROGRAM AND IN THE ACADEMIC INTERNSHIP CENTER IN GENERAL.

A. Invite all campus faculty persons who have a disability to participate in the program. This was done, and two faculty members with disabilities served on the Advisory Board the first year of the project.

B. Encourage each academic department to designate one faculty member as the liaison person for internships. The purpose of the departmental liaison was to provide the target group of students with preliminary information about the academic component of internships, and to give students encouragement in pursuing such experiences. A list of these faculty members was compiled the first year of the program. However, faculty support became much more widespread. By the second year undergraduate advisers in almost all departments encouraged students to participate in the program.

IV. PROVIDE FOR AN OBJECTIVE AND CONTINUING METHOD OF PROGRAM DIRECTION, COORDINATION, AND EVALUATION.

A. Establish a permanent advisory board on internships which well consist of employer representatives, faculty members, student representatives, and staff members. An advisory board was established for the program and met throughout the first two years of the project. Now this function has been assumed by the advisory board to the entire Internship Center.

B. Establish an exit interview system to provide for a qualitative evaluation of each individual's internship experience. The first year of the project the exit interviews were held with

both the intern and the employer present. These interviews were videotaped. This practice was discontinued because of the cost and time involved. The second year the Coordinator interviewed the students and the employers separately. It was felt this gave a more honest evaluation of the experience.

C. Develop specialized written forms to evaluate the student intern experience as it relates to clarification of educational directions, career awareness, motivation to pursue a career, and increased self-confidence; evaluate possible changes in attitude on the part of the employers concerning the capabilities of handicapped students. Written evaluations were developed for both employers and students. The last section of this objective was found to be too ambitious a goal. Evaluating attitudinal changes over time was beyond the resource level of this project.

V. DEVELOP AND DISTRIBUTE A REPLICABLE MODEL OF THE SPECIALIZED PROGRAM TO INTERESTED INSTITUTIONS AND GROUPS.

Presentations on the program were made at eight colleges and universities in the southern California area and at the 1978 System-wide Conference on Experiential Learning before representatives from the eight other University of California campuses. In addition, representatives from four in-state schools and three out-of-state schools visited the Academic Internship Center for Handicapped Students over the two year period. A brochure on the program entitled "An Experiential Learning Model for Students with Disabilities: Internships and Career Development" was distributed to over 3500 career planning and placement personnel, experiential learning personnel and rehabilitation counselors.

Several abstracts have been submitted to local and national professional associations for presentations at annual conferences. A presentation will be made at the annual convention of the National Society for Internships and Experiential Education in San Antonio, Texas in October, 1979.

In response to two problem areas identified during the first year, the following objectives were added to the initial list:

VI. RESEARCH AND ATTEMPT TO PROVIDE SOME SOLUTIONS TO THE PROBLEM OF WELFARE DEPENDENCY BY HANDICAPPED STUDENTS WHICH IN EFFECT ACTS AS A DETERRENT TO INTERNSHIPS AND CAREER PLACEMENT.

While students receive academic credit for most internships many private sector employers provide interns with stipends as well. This practice presented difficulties for students with disabilities. In discussions with these students and groups interested in the disabled outside the university, it became obious that many people with disabilities would not consider low-paying or part-time positions, because they would lose their aid from the Department of Social Security and would not be able to live on the income they would receive from the employment alone.

In attempting to resolve this problem, the Academic Internship Center for Handicapped Students hosted five meetings, each with a different local unit of the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation. A presentation of the internship program was made at each meeting and participants toured the Center. Presentations outlining the program

and stressing the importance of internships were made at two county-wide meetings of D.V.R. supervisors. Finally, letters explaining the program were sent to 25 D.V.R. counselors who had UCR students in their case loads. Through the meetings and correspondence, a better understanding of the importance of internships was reached by many D.V.R. counselors, as evidenced by the greater cooperation they have shown the Center in encouraging their clients to participate in the program.

A meeting with Financial Aid administrators at the University also proved quite fruitful. As a result of that meeting, handicapped students can have internship stipends funneled through the Financial Aid Office. These funds are reissued to the students in the form of educational grants, which do not jeopardize their state financial benefits.

VII. DEVELOP ALTERNATE SOLUTIONS TO THE TRANSPORTATION PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED BY HANDICAPPED INTERNS.

During the first quarter of the program four students were unable to accept internships because of lack of transportation. The municipal bus service was not dependable and did not have routes where needed. The campus van for students with disabilities was generally in use taking students to and from classes. Clearly, the Internship Center needed its own accessible van.

Through negatiations with the FUND FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION a solution was reached. An excess of funds from the 1977-78 budget of the grant was allocated to the leasing of an accessible van. The Department of Vocational Rehabilitation supplied

funds to equip the van for use by students with disabilities. The van was purchased outright by the University of California, Riverside at the end of the lease.

F. EVALUATION DATA AND ANALYSIS

STUDENT PARTICIPATION

Number of Placements

A total of 34 students were placed into 54 internship positions during the 5 quarters, with the following students having multiple placements.

18 students - 1 internship assignment
7 students - 2 internship assignments
3 students - 3 internship assignments
2 students - 4 internship assignments
1 student - 5 internship assignments

Academic Majors

Psychology - 8	Environmental Science - 1	Administrative Studies - 1
Sociology - 7	Statistics - 1	Economics - 2
History - 1	Liberal Studies - 1	Russian Studies - 1
English - 1	Political Science - 2	Education - 1
Biology - 2	Law & Society - 1	Undecided - 1

A total of 84% of the interns were enrolled in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, 13% were in the Natural and Agricultural Sciences, and 3% were undecided. Forty eight percent of all interns were majoring in psychology or sociology.

FACULTY PARTICIPATION

A total of 17 different faculty members were involved with the intern program, and they represented the following academic departments:

Department	Faculty	Students Supervised
Psychology	4	13
Sociology	5	13
Political Science	3	6
Biochemistry	1	1
Statistics	1	1
Admin. Studies	2	3
History	1	2

EMPLOYER PARTICIPATION

Fifty-four internships were completed in businesses, public agencies, schools, and government service offices. The locations can be categorized as follows:

School Settings - (9)

California School for the Deaf - 2
Ramona High School - 3
Sunshine School - 2
Riverside County Dept. of Education - 2

Health Agencies - (5)

Cancer Society -1
Riverside Hospital - 2
Riverside Dept. of Public Health - 2

Human Services (8)

Veterans Admin. - 2
County Vocational Rehabilitation - 1
California Institute for Women - 3
Rancho Los Amigos Hospital - 2

Private Employers - (4)

IBM - 1
Waggenseller & Durst - 1
Institute of Family & Group Therapy - 2

College and Government Administration - (14)

County Regional Parks - 2
Mayor's Office - 2
Riverside City Data Processing - 2
OMITRANS - 2
County Dept. of Transportation - 1
Chaffey College - 2
University of California - 1
UCR Personnel Office - 2

Legal Judicial Area - (12)

UCR Police Dept. - 2
County Public Defense - 3
County Probate Dept. - 4
UCR Public Safety - 2
Dept. of Justice - 1
Riverside Co. Jury Commissioner - 1

Fine Arts - (2)

Riverside County Museum - 2

The titles of the internships vary from setting to setting, but can be categorized as follows:

Education Intern	6
Counseling Intern	6
Research Intern	2
Administrative Intern	7
Probation Intern	4
Legal/Crimonology Intern	8
Occupational Therapy Intern	2
Laboratory Science Intern	1
Computer Service Intern	2
Transportation Intern	2
Museum Intern	2
Library Intern	2
Alcoholism Control Intern	1
Environmental Intern	2
Communications Intern	4
Stock Brokerage Intern	1
Statistical Intern	1
Finance Intern	1
TOTAL	54

EVALUATION OF THE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM BY STUDENTS, FACULTY & EMPLOYERS

STUDENTS

Six student interns were randomly contacted for interviews. Interviews covered the following topics:

1. Internship Placements

All students felt the internship related very well to both their academic studies and their career goals. The students' plans included becoming lawyers, physicians assistants, social welfare worker, a counselor to handicapped students, a criminoloist, and a computer programmer.

One student felt that the placement was very much individually tailored to meet his personal needs and career objectives, and the tasks assigned were very worthwhile in providing the experience he wanted. One student had some difficulty with his first placement because of his handicap, and it was agreed another placement would be more appropriate. A new location was found without difficulty. The others had no problems in the placements.

2. Preparation for Internship

One student was required to read a book on the subject area before starting the internship and he found it to be invaluable preparation. Two students who had counseling internships wished they had had more preparation in counseling; one particularly felt lost at the beginning of her internship, and needed guidance. One student believed he did not have the writing or analyzing skills necessary for the internship, but they had greatly improved during the internship.

3. Content of Seminars

The quality of the seminars and faculty sponsors appears to vary widely. a. In two seminars the students were required to meet once a week, had required readings, formal lectures by faculty members, group discussion, a reading list, two papers, and an examination. b. Two seminars consisted of group discussions with other interns, and required a journal and a term paper. c. Six interns met periodically during the quarter on an individual basis with a faculty sponsor. A written project of the students' choosing was required. d. One internship was done with no academic credit.

4. Evaluation of the Seminars

Interns who attended group seminars rated them as being very helpful. It apprears that the more structured the seminars, the higher the student evaluation of the seminar. Interns who met on an individual basis with the faculty sponsor found these conferences useful and indicated a desire for more frequent meetings.

5. Evaluation of the Internship

Students were very positive about their experience. In general, they commented on how it assisted them in seeing theory put into practice, of learning what was expected in the particular field, in gaining a better perspective of themselves, and in learning the social aspects of working with others within an organinizational structure. In two cases, the internship experiences influenced the students to alter some of his/her career directions; one from counseling to administration, and one fro law to social welfare. Another student learned during the internship that his writing and analyzing skills had to be improved. He was not aware of this from any course he had taken; as a result, he took a course in writing skills through the university.

6. Additional Evaluation and Comments

The following comments were made by the students: "I now have a perspective of what I will be up against both in law school and when I get out. I know how to write a history term paper. Most of the time you just regurgitate. But I had to prepare legal briefs in my internship. There you have to be very concrete and precise The internship made me aware of my short commings in writing ability and in analyzing. I have improved 101% in my analyzing ability and have taken a course in writing skills to improve my writing."

- "I liked the idea of the written contract. You know where you stand and what to expect. When it comes time for grading, there are no hassles."
- "The seminars were valuable because we learned different aspects of working for counseling institutions."
- "Professor _____ was top notch. He always took time from his schedule to help me."
- "I learned a lot about social organizations and a lot about counseling.
- "I learned from the students how to be strong."
- "The internship center was excellent. They helped set up appointments and helped me to get situated in my internship."
- "I learned that I did not want to work as a counselor on a one to one basis because of the emotional aspect and frustration. I learned that I couldn't get emotionally involved and realized that for me I have to keep it only on a superficial basis. I'm now looking at administration rather than counseling."
- "It would have been more worthwhile if my faculty sponsor could have met with me more often so I could keep one foot in work and one foot on campus."
- "The thing I liked most about the internship was learning about teamwork and how to get along with other employees in a coordinated effort. I learned a lot about facilities and how to work under supervision."

- "I received little help from my faculty sponsor. I had to do everything on my own rather than to depend on someone else. But it did help me to be more self-assertive."

FACULTY

Four faculty members were randomly contacted for personal interviews. Three out of the 4 conducted the group internship seminars, and each had had extensive experience with student interns, both disabled and non-disabled.

Topics discussed:

1. Quality of Student Work

All of the faculty sponsors believed that the quality of work of the handicapped students was at least equal to if not better than non-handicapped students. When asked about the verbal and written communications and analyzing skills of the students, each commented that it was a general problem of all student in college today.

2. Requirements for the Seminar

Faculty reported requiring attendance at weekly class sessions, at least one research paper in addition to a log of activities, and completion of assigned reading.

Some of the seminar topics connected self-concept of disabled students, relationship of theory to practice, the relationship of academic progress to their work experience, general responsibilities of various agencies, legal issues relating to work, and the effects of an institution upon both the professional worker and the clientele. Most used films, lectures, and discussions, and one also required individual sessions with each student in addition to the group seminar. A paper relating the work experience with the readings and the particular academic discipline were also required.

C. Suggestions for Improvement

Every faculty sponsor supported the idea of increased communication between the Academic Internship Center and the academic department. One faculty sponsor suggested that his colleagues should "maintain more academic input on a serious and vigorous level throughout the internship." In almost every case, faculty believed that the internship was an invaluable experience for students.

EMPLOYERS

Written Surveys

Ten employers were randomly surveyed by questionnaire. A total of 9 employers completed the questionnaires. Seven had supervised 1-2 interns, one 3-4 interns, and one supervised five interns. All nine believed that the internship program was coordinated in a way that allows for communication among the employers, faculty sponsors, interns, and the internship center coordinator, and all felt that communication between themselves and the internship coordinator was adequate. The responses to the other two questions on the survey were:

1) Do you feel that interns are adequately prepared for their internship experience?

43% Adequately prepared	0% Minimally prepared
57% Somewhat prepared	0% Not prepared

2) Do you find that generally interns with disabilities perform as well as other interns?

86% Most of the time

14% Some of the time

0% Little of the time

Summary of Agency Evaluation of Individual Student Interns
(Responses were received from 20 employers)

Rating of Student Performance	Excellent	Good	Average	Marginal	Unsatis-factory	No Chance observe
Accepts & follows directions	75%	20%	5%			
Works as a team member	68%	26%	6%			
Student is self-starting on work projects	55%	30%	15%			
Organizes & Completes projects on schedule	45%	35%	10%			10%
Amount of work projects produced	40%	35%	5%			20%
Demonstrates interest in career field	60%	35%	5%			
Written Communication	35%	10%	15%	5%		35%
Oral Communication	40%	40%	10%	5%		5%
Analytical Ability	40%	40%	10%			10%
Research performance in relation to product subject matter	10%	40%	15%			35%
Decision making ability	30%	60%				10%
Overall evaluation of students performance	55%	40%	5%			0%

The written surveys indicated that employers were very positive in both their attitudes toward the internship program and their evaluation of individual interns. They believed that handicapped interns performed as well as non-handicapped most of the time, and the interns were adequately prepared.

Although the overall performance level was high, interns got somewhat lower marks for their oral and written communication skills, analytic ability, research performance and decision-making ability than they did in other areas. However, it is important to note that this is the norm for this general population, disabled or not.

Telephone Interviews

Four employers who supervised interns were randomly selected for personal interviews. In general, all employers were very enthusiastic about the internship program and the students with whom they worked. Some of the topics discussed were the following:

1. Preparation for Internships

Three of the employers stated that the interns were adequately prepared for their internships in that they had a sound theoretical background. The employers viewed their responsibility as helping students to explore the various applications of those concepts. One of the employers, however, felt that one student did not have an adequate comprehension of the field and thus was not prepared for what he had to do.

2. Evaluation of Students' Skills

These employers were high in their praise of the general ability of their interns. One commented specifically on the intern's writing skills and how well she could write.

3. Relationship of the Internship to Academic Work and Career Plans

One employer believed that the intern did not have any clear career goals and therefore "tried to expose him to other areas by rotating the intern through several different departments." Another felt there was little relationship

between the academic preparation and the internship, but it did relate somewhat to the student's career goals.

4. Communications with the Academic Internship Center

The perceived communications varied with one employer citing that her contact had been through written requests for evaluations, while another felt he was in constant contact.

5. Overall Comments

Employers' overall reactions to the interns were positive. They believed it was a good learning experience both for the student and themselves and in each case wanted to have more disabled interns in the future.

G. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS

1. In general, all three populations involved with academic internships were positive in their evaluations of the experience.
2. Students felt they learned how to put theory into practice, and gained a better perspective of themselves and their relationships with others within an organized structure.
3. The internship experience caused some to alter their career plans.
4. Employers were very supportive of the internship program and planned to have more disabled student interns in the future.
5. Except for some specific physical handicaps, disabled interns performed just as well, and in some cases better, than non-disabled students.
6. Students in particular liked the concept of the written contract between themselves, the faculty members, and the employer.
7. The vast majority of disabled interns were enrolled in the humanities and social sciences compared to the natural or agricultural sciences.
8. Students tended to be more positive toward their internship if the seminars were on a group rather than individual basis.
9. The academic requirements for the internship varied. The more structured group seminars required more work than those done on an individual basis, and the students who had more required work in their seminar tended to evaluate the experience more positively.
10. Students believed their internships related directly to their academic program and career goals.
11. Faculty members indicated support for increased communications between the academic internship center and individual academic departments.
12. Every student in the sample was enthusiastic about doing more internships.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This evaluation would indicate the need for increased communications between the Academic Internship Center and sponsoring faculty members. More communication with internship employers would also be healthy.

Faculty members wishing to increase the quality of the internships they sponsor may want to offer more structured academic components with increased student contact.

Care should be taken to match student educational/career goals and skill levels with appropriate internship placements.

The problem areas that these recommendations suggest are typical of experiential learning programs. From the research conducted it is apparent that the disabled student internship program is enthusiastically supported by students, faculty and employers. Both the program's records and the evaluative research clearly point to the high level of success of this project.